

NO. 6998

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

NOV 9 1926

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DIVISION OF FOREIGN  
SERVICE ADMINISTRATION

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ACC

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL,

Naples, Italy, October 22, 1926.

To Smithsonian  
11/11/26

SUBJECT: DISCOVERY OF REMAINS OF PREHISTORIC ANIMAL.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

NOV 8 1926

DIVISION OF  
WESTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE,  
WASHINGTON.

SIR:

I have the honor to enclose herewith photographs of the remains of what appears to be a prehistoric animal lately discovered in the vicinity of Caserta, Italy. The discoverer, Mr. Francesco Caira, of Villalattina, Caserta, desires to sell the remains to some museum and for this purpose, the photographs are transmitted for possible reference to the Smithsonian or other interested museum in the United States.

Mr. Caira states that the photographs do not show the entire animal which, for lack of technical assistance has not been uncovered.

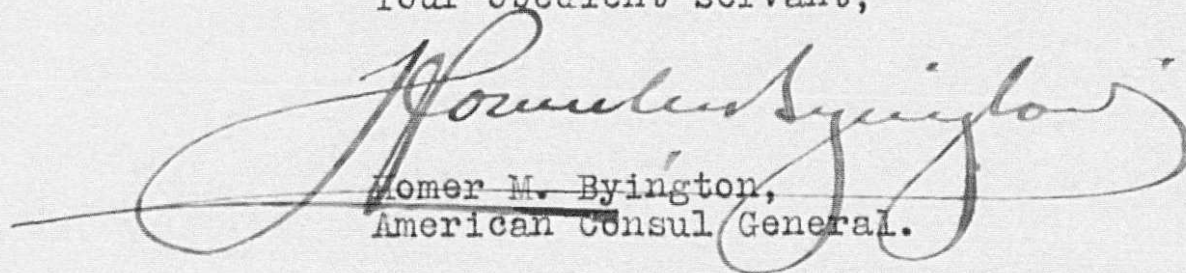
The existence of the remains are probably well known to the Italian Government. Notice of the discovery has appeared in the Paris edition of the New York Herald. The proprietor, according to report, has fenced off the discovery and is charging a small fee to visitors desiring to see the remains. Whether or not the Italian Government would interpose objections to their export to the United

States

States is unknown and will not be investigated unless interest is manifested by Americans. The matter of price has also been neglected pending the receipt of this information.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,



Homer M. Byington,  
American Consul General.

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HDF/MT



In reply refer to  
WE 865.927/-

November 18, 1926

Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution,  
Washington, D. C.

Sir:

The Department encloses a copy of a despatch  
No. 6998, of October 22, 1926, from the American Consul  
General at Naples and the photographs mentioned therein  
of the remains of what appears to be a prehistoric animal  
lately discovered in the vicinity of Caserta, Italy. The  
Consul General states that the discoverer, Mr. Francesco  
Caira, of Villalattina, Caserta, desires to sell the remains  
to a museum and for this purpose transmits the photographs  
for possible reference to your Institution or any other  
interested museum in the United States.

The enclosed despatch with the photographs are trans-  
mitted to you for such action as you may deem appropriate.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

For the Secretary of State:

Enclosures:  
From Naples,  
October 22, 1926,  
with enclosures.

Assistant Secretary.

FA:LEG: JMH:SS

CR

NOV 17, 1926.

WE 865.927

UNITED STATES NATIONAL MUSEUM  
BUREAU OF AMERICAN ETHNOLOGY  
ASTROPHYSICAL OBSERVATORY  
NATIONAL ZOOLOGICAL PARK

ALL CORRESPONDENCE  
SHOULD BE ADDRESSED  
TO THE SECRETARY



SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

Washington, U.S.A.

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART  
FREER GALLERY OF ART  
INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGES  
INTERNATIONAL CATALOGUE OF  
SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE

December 17 1926

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
DEC 10 1926  
DIVISION OF FOREIGN  
SERVICE ADMINISTRATION

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
DEC 6 1926  
DIVISION OF  
WESTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

December 4 1926

865.927

Dear Sir:

Receipt is acknowledged of your Department's communication of November 18 (WE 865.927/-), and of the copy of a despatch No. 6998, from the American Consul General at Naples together with the accompanying photographs enclosed therewith.

While the skull of the extinct elephant described would be a most desirable addition to the national collections, there are unfortunately no funds at our disposal which could be applied to its purchase, even should the Italian governmental regulations permit of its removal to this country.

Assuring you of my appreciation of the Department's interest in bringing this matter to our attention, I am,

Very respectfully yours,

Acting Secretary.

The Honorable  
The Secretary of State,  
Washington, D.C.



Homer M. Byington, Esquire,  
American Consul General,  
Naples, Italy.

Sir:

The Department has received your No. 6998 of October 22, 1926, enclosing photographs of the remains of what appears to be a prehistoric animal, lately discovered in the vicinity of Caserta, Italy. You state that the discoverer, Mr. Francesco Cairi, of Villalattina, Caserta, desires to sell the remains to a museum.

In reply, you are informed that a copy of your despatch and the photographs were forwarded to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution for consideration, and the Department is now in receipt of a reply dated December 4, 1926. It is stated that while the skull of the extinct elephant described would be a most desirable addition to the national collections, there are unfortunately no funds from which its purchase could be applied, even should the Italian Governmental regulations permit of its removal to this country.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

For the Secretary of State:

Robert J. Carr

Dec 16, 1926

865.927/1  
PA/LNG/MSA/BS  
WE

WE  
dy

RECEIVED  
DEC 16 1926  
U.S. DEPT. OF STATE

865.927/1

Central File: Decimal File 865.927, Internal Affairs Of States, Science. Philosophy., Italy, Anthropology. Ethnology. Ethnography. Archaeology., October 22, 1926. 22 Oct. 1926. MS European Colonialism in the Early 20th Century. National Archives (United States). Archives Unbound, [link.gale.com%2Fapps%2Fdoc%2FSC5109729314%2FGDSC%3Fu%3Domni%26sid%3Dbbookmark-GDSC](https://link.gale.com%2Fapps%2Fdoc%2FSC5109729314%2FGDSC%3Fu%3Domni%26sid%3Dbbookmark-GDSC). Accessed 18 June 2025.